CLAIMS

1. – 4. (cancelled)

5. (original) An integrity testing ~~In a~~ system for leak-tightness testing systems, which are adapted in turn for determining or testing whether a canister ~~cannister,~~ or other sealed, hollow body~~,~~ filled with a liquid or gas under pressure is leaky, where such leak-tightness testing systems employ ~~system employs creation of a vacuum in~~ a vacuum chamber ~~chambers~~ and any change in pressure within the vacuum chamber is monitored, the integrity testing system comprising ~~improvement which comprises placing~~ a test body (20) adapted to removably absorb a defined amount of moistness, and the ~~in the~~ vacuum chamber (30) of the leak-tightness testing system,

wherein at least a portion of the test body is exposed to the vacuum chamber,

whereby moisture is removed from the test body when a vacuum is generated in the vacuum chamber, the removed moisture producing a pressure increase in the vacuum chamber over a pre-determined time span ~~a defined amount of moistness is supplied to the test body (20) in advance and increase in pressure is measured in the vacuum chamber (30)~~.

6. (original) The integrity testing system ~~apparatus~~ as recited in claim 5, wherein the test body ~~(20)~~ comprises polyamide ~~of defined size of surface~~.

7. (original) The integrity testing system ~~apparatus~~ as recited in claim 5 ~~6~~, wherein the test body comprises polyoxymethylene (POM).

8. (new) The integrity testing system of claim 5, wherein the pressure increase is a pre-specified pressure increase when the vacuum chamber is leak-tight.

9. (new) The integrity testing system as recited in claim 8, wherein the pre-specified pressure increase simulates the amount of leakage that would be just acceptable from a leak-tight hollow body to be tested in the vacuum chamber.

10. (new) The integrity testing system of claim 5, wherein the vacuum chamber is not leak-tight when the pressure increase exceeds a pre-specified pressure increase.

11. (new) The integrity testing system as recited in claim 10, wherein the pre-specified pressure increase simulates the amount of leakage that would be just acceptable from a leak-tight hollow body to be tested in the vacuum chamber.

12. (new) The integrity testing system as recited in claim 5, wherein the test body is adapted to absorb a defined amount of moistness from the ambient atmosphere before being placed in the vacuum chamber.

13. (new) The integrity testing system as recited in claim 5, wherein the test body can be re-used.

14. (new) A process for the integrity testing of leak-tightness testing systems, which leak-tightness testing systems in turn test whether a canister or other sealed, hollow body is leak-tight, the process comprising:

providing a test body, wherein a defined amount of moistness is supplied to the test body in advance;

placing the test body in a vacuum chamber of a leak-tightness testing system;

generating a vacuum around the test body in the vacuum chamber, wherein moisture is removed from the test body, and wherein a pressure increase is produced in the vacuum chamber by the moisture removed from the test body;

measuring the pressure increase in the vacuum chamber over a pre-determined time span to determine if the leak-tightness testing system is leak-tight.

15. (new) The process of claim 14, wherein the pressure increase is a pre-specified pressure increase when the leak-tightness testing system is leak-tight.

16. (new) The process of claim 15, wherein the pre-specified pressure increase simulates the amount of leakage that would be just acceptable from a leak-tight hollow body to be tested in the leak-tightness testing system.

17. (new) The process of claim 14, wherein the leak-tightness testing system is not leak-tight when the pressure increase exceeds a pre-specified pressure increase.

18. (new) The process of claim 17, wherein the pre-specified pressure increase simulates the amount of leakage that would be just acceptable from a leak-tight hollow body to be tested in the vacuum chamber.

19. (new) The process of claim 14, wherein the test body is adapted to absorb a defined amount of moistness from the ambient atmosphere before being placed in the vacuum chamber.

20. (new) The process of claim 14, wherein the test body can be re-used.

21. (new) The process of claim 14, wherein the test body comprises polyamide.

22. (new) The process of claim 14, wherein the test body comprises polyoxymethylene (POM).

REMARKS

Claims 5 to 22 are pending in this application. Original claims 1 to 4 have been cancelled. Claims 8 to 22 are new.

Referring to 37 CFR 1.76(d), the Application Data Sheet is controlling for most of the information provided to the Patent Office, including information regarding priority claims. Thus, inconsistent information between the ADS and the Inventor's Declaration is resolved by reference to the ADS, instead of the Inventor's Declaration. Since the Inventor's Declaration contains all the required statements, and the ADS provides the correct priority date, the Applicant respectfully submits that a new or supplemental Inventor's Declaration is not required. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner's objection to the Inventor's Declaration be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Per the Examiners recommendations, the specification has been amended hereinabove. The Applicant respectfully submits that the objections to the specification are now moot and should be withdrawn.

The art-based rejections essentially rely on US Patent No. 6,082,184 to Lehmann for a Method for Leak Testing and Leak Testing Apparatus. The critical difference between Lehmann and the present application is that, while the system of Lehmann is a leak-testing system for testing sealed containers, the system claimed by the present application tests for leaks in the leak-testing system itself using an intentionally leaky

(i.e., un-sealed) test body. Thus, the Applicant respectfully submits that Lehmann does not describe or even suggest the presently claimed system.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: Nov. 16, 2004

Thomas Blankinship
Reg. No. 39,909
Telephone: (203) 791-6615
Facsimile: (203) 798-4408
E-mail: tblankin@rdg.boehringer-ingelheim.com

Patent Department
Boehringer Ingelheim Corp.
900 Ridgebury Road, P.O. Box 368
Ridgefield, CT 06877
Tel: (203) 791-6615

Certificate of Mailing

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner For Patents
P. O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

on November 16, 2004.

Thomas Blankinship, Reg. No. 39,909